

*LET'S BAPTIZE  
MORE  
CONVERTS*



*DR. JACK HYLES*

# Let's Baptize More Converts

by Dr. Jack Hyles

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## Introduction

By: John R. Rice

The cover picture shows Dr. Jack Hyles baptizing a man won to Christ in the First Baptist Church of Hammond, Indiana, where he is pastor. Last year there were more than 2800 public professions of faith in Christ in that church and Dr. Hyles baptized 1410 of these converts.

On the day of Pentecost at Jerusalem we are told, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41). And Acts 5:42, speaking of the same group of Christians at Jerusalem, says, "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." And Acts 2:47 tells us after Pentecost, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

So it is proper for a local New Testament church to be in the daily business of winning souls, and such a church should baptize converts at least every week.

Records indicate that up until 1966, only about 20 churches in America baptized as many as 200 converts a year. The largest non-Catholic denomination in America baptized about 11 1/2 converts per church averaging about 365 members or about 1 convert to every 30 or 31 members. Other groups with smaller churches baptized fewer per church. Some smaller groups baptized more. Yet a half dozen fundamental Baptist churches baptized from 350 to more than 1700 converts per year. How do they win so many souls in a year's time?

Dr. Hyles here tells how any pastor and church not baptizing hundreds of converts in a year can set out to win and baptize many more converts than ever before by God's blessing.

Not all converts will be baptized. Some with an ingrained prejudice are not at once ready for baptism. Some go to other denominations and some live far and thus prefer some other church. Sometimes little children are saved and it is wise to counsel with their fathers and mothers and to make sure that they understand the plan of salvation and are definitely assured of their faith in Christ. Thus not all converts will be baptized in a strongly evangelistic church that wins them.

Yet all Christians ought to be baptized and the number of converts baptized is the most fair and reliable measure of the success of a church in following Christ's Great Commission to, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:19,20).

Scores of churches are setting out to win and baptize 200 converts or more in a year's time. We thank Dr. Hyles for suggesting methods to help us in this holy business of fulfilling Christ's command.

John R. Rice

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"Who baptized Jesus?" asked a beginner Sunday school teacher.

After a few moments of deliberation little Johnny raised his hand and answered, "John the Baptist did."

"That's right," replied the teacher. "Now another question: Who baptized John the Baptist?" This was a real stumper. Finally, after much deliberation, little Johnny's hand went up again. "All right, Johnny, who did baptize John the Baptist?"

"Brother Hyles did," replied the boy.

This took place in a little Country church in East Texas in 1949. I was the pastor of the little country church. The teacher was one of our fine teachers, and Johnny was one of our beginner boys. Johnny said a great deal about his pastor in that little statement. He was saying, "My pastor must have baptized almost everybody because he baptizes so much." He was also saying, "My pastor puts a great stress on baptism and even John the Baptist would have been pleased to have Brother Hyles baptize him."

Johnny was right in one respect. Brother Hyles does place a big emphasis on baptism. To be sure, baptism is not necessary to salvation, but it is necessary to obedience. There are several reasons why it is important. The first is, baptism pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We should tell the world immediately upon salvation that we believe in these basic truths.

Then, baptism also pictures what has happened to us at salvation. It is somewhat like an X-ray. An X-ray reveals internal conditions to the human eye; baptism reveals salvation to the human eye. One says to the world, "Look, let me show you outwardly what happened to me inwardly. As I go down into the water, I am showing you that I have buried the old life; and as I rise from the water. I am showing you that

I have risen to walk in the newness of life. I am a new creature and I want you to see it."

Then, baptism also identifies us with Jesus Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection.

Baptism is one of the few things that we can do exactly like Jesus did. Oh, yes, we are to strive to be like Him. We are to follow His example. The first and best way for a Christian to do this is by obeying His command of baptism.

Jesus places a great deal of emphasis on baptism. This is shown so vividly in the inclusion of this ordinance in the Great Commission. Had it not been important to Him, He would not have included it in what we commonly call "The Great Commission."

In March of 1965, I went on a tour of Bible Lands. It was my privilege to baptize four people in the Jordan River. We walked out into the Jordan River just where the Sea of Galilee flows into the Jordan. With the Sea of Galilee in the background and the Promise Land framing the scene, I, like John the Baptist, baptized in the Jordan. As the five of us walked into the river, a group of nineteen believers sang:

On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,  
And cast a wistful eye  
To Canaan's fair and happy land,  
Where my possessions lie.

I am bound for the promised land ...  
I am bound for the promised land  
O who will come and go with me?  
I am bound for the promised land.

What a thrill it was to baptize in the Jordan River!

It is, however, my privilege to enjoy that same thrill Sunday after Sunday, as newborn babes in Christ follow the command of the Saviour in believers' baptism. It is my desire in the next few pages to help pastors and churches around the world increase their number of

converts and the number of baptisms. May God use these remarks to fulfill that purpose.



## **FIND NEW AVENUES OF PROSPECTS**

When most of us think of prospects, we limit our thoughts to new families moving in our area, or those found in a church census, etc. There are, however, thousands of people who go practically unnoticed, uncared for, and, sad to say, unloved by the average church. Now to notice a few of these:

### **1. The Retarded and Educable Slow**

Recently, at First Baptist Church, we became aware of the many children who are retarded, and, therefore, unable to sit in the average Sunday school class and be helped. This led us to start a class for children twelve and under who are mentally behind their age. It wasn't long until twelve to fifteen were attending every Sunday.

How did this help increase our converts? In two ways: First, the fact that we had such a class made it possible for the entire families to come to Sunday school who were previously unable to do so. We have had mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters saved because there was a class for the educable slow in our church.

In the second place, it is surprising how many children who are twelve years of age and are somewhat retarded still can comprehend the plan of salvation. We have a little fellow who is about eleven and has the mind of a child about six or seven who understood clearly what it means to be a sinner and that Jesus died on the cross for sinners, and gladly received Him as his Saviour. It was my joy recently to baptize him and share with his family this happy occasion.

This class grew so rapidly that God burdened us for a class for older retarded people. Now we have about fifteen older ones attending this class. Think of this! Approximately thirty retarded people are attending our Sunday school. The average family has four members. That means there are three others in each family who now can attend Sunday school also. This could be an increase of one

hundred twenty in Sunday school attendance and many more conversions and baptisms.

## 2. A Class Taught in a Foreign Language

We found that in our area there are many people who speak only Spanish. Hundreds of them attend no Sunday school whatsoever. God gave us a fine soul-winning lady who speaks Spanish fluently. She now teaches the Sunday school lesson in Spanish each Sunday. Scores of Spanish-speaking people have been saved from this new class.

While in Ottawa, Canada, one pastor said, "This would apply to us. We have many French-speaking people in Ottawa. A Sunday school class taught in French would, no doubt, enable us to reach many people that we have not been reaching."

## 3. A Work With the Deaf

It is unbelievable how many deaf people there are in the average city. The Sunday before this writing we had forty-three deaf people in our Sunday school. The lesson is taught in sign language and then the deaf come to the regular preaching service and have the message interpreted to them, during the service, by the deaf interpreter. We have many saved and baptized from this ministry.

Think for a minute what we have already done in reaching just the retarded, the Spanish-speaking and the deaf. If we could reach one hundred twenty people in the families of the retarded children, forty-three in deaf class and fifteen or twenty in the Spanish-speaking class, we have increased our Sunday school by nearly two hundred and have found avenues of reaching many more for Christ.

## 4. Work With the Shut-ins

One lady of our church goes into the homes of each shut-in once a month. She takes a tape recorder and plays one of the pastor's messages and a personal greeting from the pastor. She will take some little gift from the church, and spend a few minutes meeting the spiritual needs of the shut-in. When the shut-in is won to Christ, we

provide an ambulance, if needed, or a wheel chair, a hospital bed and any other need that will enable them to come to the services. We carry them bodily to the dressing room and baptize them. Shouldn't the shut-ins have the privilege of being baptized after they are saved? Certainly they should.

It is often necessary to have a private service for them. It is not too unusual for us to have a shut-in baptized in the presence of the family and few friends on a week day or a Sunday afternoon.

## 5. New Buses

Probably nothing would help to increase one's Sunday attendance and the number of conversions and baptisms more than starting bus routes. At the First Baptist Church of Hammond, we now operate thirty-seven routes bringing between one thousand and thirteen hundred people to Sunday school and church every Sunday. Though we will not go into the organizational part of the bus ministry, and it takes organization and hard work, let me stress the importance of adding new buses and new routes. People who come on a new bus route are net gain. Many churches could baptize hundreds more a year by adding buses and bus routes.

## 6. Poor Children

We have found in our area scores of little children from poor homes who actually never eat a real good hot meal. We have started a Sunday school class for them, and at noon on Sunday feed them a hot meal. Of course, this is limited just to the poor. We are now having between fifty and a hundred in this class. Many of these boys and girls only get one good meal a week. And while they do, they get the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

There are many avenues of reaching prospects. Such things as rescue mission work, work in the rest homes, canvassing trailer courts, work with the blind, etc., will bring eternal rewards and increase the churches' number of conversions and baptisms.

## **MAKE EVERY SERVICE EVANGELISTIC AND ADVERTISE YOUR CHURCH AS AN EVANGELISTIC CHURCH**

It is extremely important that the entire area be conscious that your church is after sinners and aware of the fact that at any given service you are trying to reach people for Christ. This will encourage them to bring their loved ones and friends to your services if they want to get them saved. Your church should be known as an evangelistic headquarters in the city.

Let me illustrate. A lady in our city who attends another church recently called me on the telephone telling me that her husband was coming to our services that evening. Then she continued to say that her church was having a musical program, and her husband finally consented to go to a service one time. She knew that the First Baptist Church would try to get him saved. She knew that no musical program ever takes the place of preaching in our Sunday services. She could count on it. She brought him: he was saved. He joined her church after he was saved and is now attending faithfully. Scores of people do this each year.

One lady called me on the phone and said, "I attend another church, but my brother is dying in the hospital and I want you to try to win him." I asked her why she didn't call her own pastor. She replied, "He does not specialize in those cases." But she knew I did. So we reached him for Christ before he died.

This will enable you to be a blessing to other churches as well as your own. It is vitally important for an evangelistic church to be known as such. And even if a sermon is directed to Christians, there should be a strong evangelistic appeal at the end of the message inviting people to come to Jesus Christ.

Now, we do have musical programs, but they are on week nights and announced as such. We do have Christmas programs and Christian movies, but they are at times other than the announced public

preaching service. We always have the preaching of the Word of God and a gospel invitation in our Sunday services.

Suppose that a person prays for a lost loved one. Finally, his prayer is answered and the loved one agrees to attend the services. Suppose that this particular service is one where no invitation is given and no evangelistic appeal is offered. What a tragedy this would be! Now I am not saying that everything in the church should be evangelism, but I am saying that everything in the church should ultimately end in the salvation of souls, and that people should know they can bring their lost loved ones to the services at any time to have them hear the message of salvation and have an opportunity to be converted.

## **BAPTIZE BOTH SUNDAY MORNING AND SUNDAY EVENING AND BAPTIZE THE CONVERTS IMMEDIATELY UPON SALVATION**

We should make it easy for people to be baptized. It is a step of obedience. It is the first step of obedience after salvation. Many churches could double their baptisms simply by baptizing on Sunday morning as well as Sunday evening and by having the baptistry filled at all times and by having necessary preparation for such services.

This is not foreign to New Testament practice. In fact, in the New Testament, baptism immediately followed salvation. Acts 2:41 says, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." Notice the words "the same day." Hence, on Pentecost the converts were baptized immediately.

Now turn to Acts 2:47. " Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Notice that the converts were being added to the church daily. Since the converts were being baptized before being added to the church, this would lead us to believe that they continued baptizing converts immediately upon salvation.

In Acts 8:37,38 we read, " And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." Now here was a man whom Philip had never seen before. He was of another race and another country. He was just traveling through, yet he was baptized immediately.

Now turn to Acts 9:17,18, "And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes

as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." The Apostle Paul likewise was baptized soon after his salvation.

We also find the same thing in Acts 10:47,48. "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days." In the house of Cornelius Peter had preached. Many had been saved. Now they are ready for a baptismal service.

In Acts 16:14,15 we read. "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us." Here again we have a convert. Here is a lady that perhaps Paul had never seen before, yet she was saved and immediately baptized. In this same chapter we have a similar story. Look at Acts 16:33, "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." Note the words "the same hour."

Believing that our church should follow the New Testament pattern, the First Baptist Church of Hammond has practiced this for a number of years. To do so, however, there are certain provisions that must be made.

1. Clothing. The ladies in the church keep us supplied with baptismal robes or smocks for the new converts to wear. We have all sizes and also keep a generous supply of underclothing for the converts. This enables them to be baptized in the same service when they make their public profession of faith.

2. Towels. Scores of towels are kept available for the converts to use. This means that the convert has to bring nothing with him for baptism. He may be baptized, as was the case in the Book of Acts, on the "same day."

3. Hairdryers. We keep a generous supply of hairdryers available (especially for the ladies) to avoid catching colds, etc.

4. Caps. We provide plastic caps for the ladies with which to cover their hair if they prefer not to get their hair wet.

5. Helpers. There are many people involved in making an immediate baptismal service possible. First, there are folks who work at the altar, talking to the new converts and, after they have trusted Jesus and are assured of salvation, explaining to them that they can be baptized immediately. These workers also point them to the door leading to the stairs and the baptismal room. Just inside the door there is a young man who is waiting for the converts pointing to the stairs leading to the baptistry. Then at the top of the stairs there is a young man to show them which is the ladies' room and which is the men's room. Inside the dressing room there are little stalls, about the size of a telephone booth, where the people dress for baptism. Three to five ladies work in the ladies' room, and three to five men work in the men's room passing out the towels, smocks, etc., and helping the converts in preparation for baptism. Then there is a person at the top of the steps leading down into the baptistry who explains to them how to be baptized before they enter the water. Then there are three of us down in the water. While I am baptizing a man, one of the men in the water is getting a lady down in the water. While the man leaves the baptistry, the lady is coming in. While she is being baptized, the third man is preparing a man and helping him down into the water. After the lady leaves, a man comes. This enables us to baptize about four to five converts a minute without any appearance of rushing and taking no less time with each person in the actual experience of baptism. We will baptize an average of twenty-five to thirty each Sunday morning, and the entire service takes only about ten minutes.

It is sad that many churches make it difficult to get baptized. Take this same logic and use it about other things that a new Christian should do. Should we let a new Christian wait awhile before he tithes? Should we make it hard for him to tithe? Should we make it hard for a new Christian to quit drinking and smoking? Should we



advise him to go back to the bar for awhile to be sure he is saved? Or should we make it easy for him to quit his sins and start tithing? The sad thing is that many of us do not look upon baptism as being an act of obedience on the part of the believer. So in many cases we actually hinder him from being obedient in baptism.

We should not overlook the fact that the baptistry should be filled and warm at all services, and that the baptismal service should be an impressive one. It should be done smoothly and gracefully. People should get the idea that it is not a hard thing to get baptized. Many people do not want to get baptized because they are afraid of the water. Often times this fear is created, at least enhanced, by a pastor not taking the proper care in the actual administering of the ordinance. If it is done in a crude, jerky way, it may strike fear into the hearts of people, especially little ones, who will not want to get baptized because they are afraid of the ordeal.

## **PASTOR AND PEOPLE SHOULD SET PERSONAL GOALS FOR SOUL WINNING**

Just as it is wise for the church to have many saved and baptized, it is also wise for the pastor to set a personal goal for himself and lead his people in the same thing. For example, why couldn't a pastor be responsible for baptizing fifty-two converts a year that he wins to Christ? This certainly should be a minimum. I have numbers of people in my church who are responsible for more than this, and I have several people in my church who bring over one hundred converts a year down the aisle professing faith in Jesus Christ. It might be well for the pastor to preach on soul winning and for his invitation ask the people to set a goal and ask God to give them that goal for souls for the coming year.

Immediately someone will suggest that numbers are not important and that we should not major on numbers. That is true if you are majoring on numbers for numbers' sake. But if you are majoring on numbers for souls' sake, certainly it is justifiable. Any church should be more pleased at baptizing one hundred than fifty, or two hundred than one hundred. Numbers are simply expressions of the intensity of soul-winning effort.

Let us look in the Word of God. In Acts 2:41 we find these words, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." You will notice that the Holy Spirit was very careful to say there were about "3,000" saved at Pentecost.

Then in Acts 4:4, "Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand." Notice in this verse about "5,000" more were saved. The Holy Spirit was very careful to deal in numbers.

Now turn back to Acts 1:15, "And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were

about an hundred and twenty)." Somebody counted the prayer meeting crowd, didn't they?

Now to John 6:10, "And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand." This great miracle of the feeding of five thousand men plus women and children is called by most of us the "feeding of the 5,000." The very fact that we have given it this title means that we are stressing numbers.

Now look at John 6:9: "There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?" The Holy Spirit is very careful to tell us about how many fishes and how many loaves.

In John 6:13, "Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten." Here we find that the Holy Spirit tells us how many baskets of fragments remain.

These are only a few examples of scores of others in the Bible where the Holy Spirit deals in numbers. Numbers are important with God. He had rather see two people saved than one. He had rather see one hundred saved than fifty. He had rather see two hundred saved than one hundred because every statistic represents a soul who will spend eternity with Christ and escape the fires of Hell.

## **WE SHOULD BATHE THE CHURCH IN SOUL WINNING**

Everything we do in the church should have behind it the underlying passion that men are lost and must be saved if they go to Heaven. Soul-winning churches must be made up of soul-winning ingredients. One cannot use pink and white brick in a building and have a red brick building. A housewife cannot use sand, red clay and mud and make an angel food cake. Neither can our churches leave off soul-winning ingredients and have in the end soul-winning churches.

Let us notice the necessary ingredients if one is to have a soul-winning church.

### **1. A Soul-Winning Pastor**

It is utter folly to think that a soul-winning church could exist without a soul-winning pastor. Someone has said that everything rises and falls on leadership. If a church is to be a warm, evangelistic, soul-winning institution, it must be led by a soul winning pastor. Would God that every pulpit committee in America when seeking a pastor would settle for nothing less than a man who is an active soul winner.

"Is he married?"

"Does he have curly hair?"

"What seminary did he attend?"

"How old is he?"

"How many children does he have?"

"Is he handsome?"

These and many other questions are asked concerning the choosing of a new pastor when a pulpit is vacant. Oh, may God help us to ask, "Is he a soul winner?"

### **2. Soul-Winning Deacons**

If a church is going to be a soul-winning institution, it must of necessity have soul-winning ingredients. The second of these ingredients must be soul-winning deacons. Far too many churches consider the financial standing of a man when choosing him to be a deacon. Being a businessman does not make a man qualified to be a deacon. Being a successful politician, an influential banker, or a wealthy financier should give a man no advantage at all over any other man when it comes to choosing a deacon.

Literally hundreds of churches do not have one active soul winner on the board, and yet, hope somehow that this kind of an ingredient, added to others of similar weaknesses, will in the end bring a soul-winning church. This, of course, is foolishness.

At the First Baptist Church in Hammond, we have sixty fine, consecrated deacons. These men are not chosen because of their financial standing, their social position, or educational background, but rather because of their love for the Word of God and the compassion for lost souls. Let us choose soul-winning deacons.

### 3. A Soul-Winning Staff

The idea of hiring specialists for a staff is a dangerous one. To be sure, a music director should know music. A secretary should be able to type. The youth director should have a heart for young people. And the custodian should use a broom. But this should not end their responsibilities.

At First Baptist Church, we require every staff member to be a soul winner and spend at least four hours a week in personal soul winning. We would not want someone leading our choir in "Send the Light," "Rescue the Perishing," "Where He Leads Me I Will Follow," and other great songs who is not a soul winner. I would not want anyone typing my letters who was not a soul winner. How foolish it is to think that we can hire a pastor who is not a soul winner, ordain deacons because of their community standing, employ a staff of specialists and end up with a soul-winning church. If this is true, then two plus two equals eighteen.

#### 4. Soul-Winning Members

According to the Great Commission, we are to teach new converts to go and get others converted. How sad it is that in many churches it is years before a Christian knows how to be a soul winner. And many a Christian, it is sad to say, never learns to be a soul winner. He simply is not taught. He is taught church doctrine, the Articles of Faith, and even church history, but not soul winning. Yet, many churches guilty of this error would consider themselves soul-winning churches, or at least desirous of becoming so.

At our new members' reception, when we welcome new members into our church family, we give them a copy of my book, Let's Go Soul Winning. This gives them a step-by-step set of instructions as to how to win a soul to Christ. The following Sunday night they are taught how to win souls. This is the first thing that our new members learn.

It is not unusual for a person to be winning souls to Christ within the first week or two after he is saved and many of our converts will win a dozen or more in the first month. This is the New Testament pattern.

The woman at the well of Sychar in John chapter 4 did not wait until she had a Bible institute diploma before going to Sychar and bringing people to Jesus. Andrew did not wait for a seminary degree before bringing Peter to Jesus, in John 1. Let us teach our new Christians how to become soul winners, and have a soul-winning membership.

#### 5. Soul-Winning Worship

A pastor chosen because of his good looks, a deacon board chosen because of financial position, a staff chosen to be a group of experts and specialists, an untrained membership, and a ritualistic, formal Sunday morning worship service, do not equal a soul-winning church. If we are to have the pie, we must have the ingredients. If we reach the result, we must use the means.

Perhaps nothing hinders soul winning any more in our churches than our misconception of what worship really is. The Old Testament idea that God lives in the church house and that we come by to see Him every Sunday, making us enter the church as we would a morgue, and behave ourselves as at a funeral, is certainly discouraging to New Testament evangelism and personal soul winning. If we plan to have Billy Sunday results, we had better have Billy Sunday services. If we plan to have an evangelistic end, we had better use evangelistic means.

Now it may be that you do not want an evangelistic church. If this be true, then, you certainly have a right to use non-evangelistic methods. But for one to say he wants an evangelistic church and use methods foreign to such results is inconsistency. Let us have dignity in our services. Let them be planned decently and in order. Let there be true Bible reverence, but not the ritualistic order of service we have borrowed from Catholicism which tends to deaden our services, drive away the common man, and lessen soul winning and evangelistic fervor.

## 6. A Soul-Winning Mission Program

If we are to build soul-winning churches, we must build them abroad as well as at home. It is not enough to give great sums of money to foreign missions and not see to it that the foreign missionaries are winning souls. Often times a church will boast concerning the thousands of dollars it gives to foreign missions, and will actually get fewer souls saved for its money than a church that gives much less to real warm-hearted evangelistic missionaries. We should see to it the kind of work our missionaries do overseas is typical of the kind of work we are trying to do at home.

For a number of years now we have required each missionary supported by the First Baptist Church to fill out a questionnaire annually. He must sign a statement as to his doctrinal soundness, personal separation from the world, and loyalty to the First Baptist Church. He must give a report of his soul-winning and evangelistic efforts. A missionary who is not majoring on soul winning is dropped

from our budget. Of course, we do not leave him stranded on the field. If he is completely dependent upon our support, we wait until his next furlough. I am simply saying that every ingredient of a soul-winning church should be a soul-winning ingredient if we are to have the desired end.

## 7. Soul-Winning Music

Few things in our churches have done as much to steal the spirit of evangelism as has our music. If one would have Billy Sunday results, perhaps he should try Homer Rodeheaver music. If one would want the results of Moody, perhaps he should sing the songs of Sankey. The kind of music that tends to build soul-winning churches is that kind which has been tested and tried in revivals - the kind which the people know and love; the kind which moves the heart and not the head, the kind whose words bring out the deep truths of the Word of God.

We use no anthems in the First Baptist Church. It is not because we do not like them but because we feel they are not conducive to soul winning and evangelism. We sing the songs such as "Rescue the Perishing," "Blessed Assurance," "How Firm a Foundation," "The Old Rugged Cross," "There Is Power in the Blood," "At Calvary," "At the Cross," "Send the Light," etc. Yes, these songs are sung on Sunday morning as well as Sunday evening. We do not delegate the Sunday morning service to God the Father and the Sunday evening service to Jesus Christ. We use the same type music in all of our services, believing that the Gospel should be preached on Sunday morning as well as Sunday night, and that Gospel music should be used if Gospel results are desired.

One danger here is for the pastor to leave the music entirely up to the music director. I do not mean that the music director should have no freedom. However, I do mean that the pastor should realize it is his right to have veto power. The general type music should be approved by the pastor. It would do many pastors and churches good to reconsider their musical program and see that it is the type music that will bring soul-winning results.



## 8. A Soul-Winning Invitation

There is an old spiritual that says, " Ev'rybody talkin' about Heaven ain't going there." We could paraphrase it and say, "A lot of folks talking about soul winning ain't doing it."

If a church is to be a soul-winning church, there should be a fifty-two-week-a-year consistency in its program of soul winning. Invitations should be given both morning and evening and a burden and compassion should be evident at every invitation. I fear the trend toward simply asking interested people to seethe pastor after the service, where no invitation hymn is sung and no sincere heart appeal is made for people to come to Jesus Christ.

Let us train soul winners to work with converts. Let us study carefully the invitations of the great revival meetings of the past. If we would have revival results perennially, let us have evangelistic invitations regularly.

## 9. An Evangelistic Budget

Check the budget of the average church and you will be surprised how little money is spent for soul-winning purposes. Oh, yes, we say we believe in soul winning, and at The same time spend our money for other purposes. As we draw up our budgets, let us support schools that train soul winners, missionaries who are soul winners, local mission projects that are after souls, and pay the salaries of staff members who win souls. Include in the budget such soul-winning ministries as bus routes, rescue mission, tracts, etc.

## 10. A Soul-Winning Schedule

I have reviewed and read many church calendars. After reading them it is not hard to understand why our churches are not soul-winning institutions. Check the average schedule of activities for a typical church. It will include a mixed bowling league, the men's soft ball team, the ladies aid, the children's party, the youth skating party. See how many times you see anything mentioned concerning a soul-winning activity.

The poorest attended meetings of the average church are the visitation meetings. Ten times as many people will work in the church kitchen as will work on the church field. We pastors certainly find ourselves guilty as we plan our church programs. We preach on soul winning and schedule it right out of the church. We have plenty of time for all of our meetings and plenty of people attend, but so little time for soul winning. Yet we preach on soul winning and say we want a soul-winning church.

We want to choose a pastor because of the vocabulary, deacons because they are rich, have members that have not been taught, budgets that bypass evangelism, ritualistic worship, long-haired music, brief invitations, and using those as ingredients, pull out of the oven a soul-winning church. Brethren, it simply will not work.

## 11. Soul-Winning Organization

Here is a sore spot and a hindrance to building a great soul-winning church. Laymen who work hard all day and have a limited number of hours to serve the Lord or the church find themselves using these hours in unnecessary committee activity and finding themselves with no hours left to go soul winning.

It does not take a committee of five to put the flowers on the Lord's Supper table every Sunday morning. It does not take a committee of ten to tell the music director what the special should be on Sunday. It does not take a committee of three to put an ad in the newspaper every Saturday. Why couldn't these same people organize soul-winning committees, rescue mission committees, tract committees, house-to-house committees, visitation committees, etc., thereby utilizing what spare time the laymen do have in the fulfilling of the Great Commission.

We have trained churches full of specialists who attend every meeting except the soul-winning meeting; do church work, and yet, not the work that Jesus called us to do; and have a form of godliness but know nothing of the power thereof. The average church is so bogged down with too much organization that the people simply do not have time to carry out the Great Commission in their individual

lives. Yet, we wonder why we do not have stalwart people; we wonder why the prayer meeting attendance is down; we wonder why the number of baptisms are down. We weep, and oftentimes even pray, over our lack of soul-winning fervor and at the same time organize soul winning out the back door of the church. Brethren, our people simply do not have time to win souls when they are committed to committees that have little or no purpose for existence.

At the First Baptist Church in Hammond we have helped to solve this problem by having many deacons and choosing each of our church officers from the board of deacons. Our board of deacons meet regularly and when our deacons are in session, every committee and officer in our church is present. There is no such thing, then, as a week-night committee meeting in our church. We operate on the democratic principle. The deacons are advisors, the church votes the decisions for the business matters on the floor of the church, and the membership is trained to do the thing that Jesus left us here to do.

## 12. Soul-Winning Liabilities

To be sure there are many liabilities that come with a soul-winning church. A soul-winning church may be a little noisier than the average church because it will have a lot of poor people there who are unaccustomed to coming to church. It will take them a while to learn how to behave as they should. Then a soul-winning church will also have more dropouts than a church that is not evangelistic. The more babies you have, the more likely you are to lose one.

The same is true in a home. If a couple wants to have clean walls, no dirty diapers, no baby clothes hanging on the line, no burping on a clean dress, no broken vases, no fingerprints on the mirrors, and no hand prints on the towels, then it is best they have no children. With children comes these liabilities. But blessed be God, they are worth every one of them! So are the souls of men worth the price we pay.

## **HAVE A SOUL-WINNING COURSE AND USE SOUL-WINNING SKITS**

Once a year at our church we have a course on personal soul winning. This course is sometimes taught on several consecutive evenings. Sometimes it is over a period of several weeks on Wednesday nights, but every year we teach our people how to win souls to Christ. We use the simple little plan in my book, Let's Go Soul Winning, published by the Sword of the Lord Publishers at \$1.00 per copy. We do not go into the details as to what Scriptures to use for what particular kind of sinner. We simply teach the simple way to lead a soul to Christ. We call it the "Roman Road."

Then, from time to time, we have soul-winning skits. Someone that we have won to Christ is brought to the platform. The experience is relived before the people. Such a skit is presented on my long-play record recorded by Diadem Studios and sold at \$3.79 per copy. This record deals for forty minutes with the soul-winning course that we teach and for twenty minutes in an actual experience of winning a soul to Christ.

A number of years ago we had such a skit. The person who had been won to Christ was asked if he were a Christian. He replied, "Yes." We paused for a minute and explained to him that we were reliving his experience and wanted him to act as he did the day he was saved.

Again we knocked on the door and asked. "Sir, are you a Christian?"

He replied, " ... Yes ... I am ... ." Again we interrupted the skit and reminded him that he was supposed to say, "No, I am not a Christian," because we were showing the people what happened the day he was saved. It seemed that he understood. Again, we knocked on the door and asked, "Are you a Christian?"

"Yes," he replied. Then he began to weep a little and said with puckered lips, "I am not going to get lost again for nobody."

## **THE PASTOR AND GOOD SOUL WINNERS SHOULD TAKE PROSPECTIVE SOUL WINNERS WITH THEM**

It is not a good idea for two good soul winners to go soul winning together. It is best for them to divide and each take another who can learn by watching. When Jesus was on earth, He took twelve men with Him. They watched Him, followed Him, and learned His work. Upon His going back to Heaven, He left His work in their hands, they had learned by watching His example. I take people soul winning with me very often. Some of the finest soul winners we have in our church are people who have been soul winning with the pastors and have learned by watching.

One of the finest things about personal soul winning is that people won in the home by personal soul winners become personal soul winners faster than those who are saved in the public services. He sees a demonstration of soul winning at his own conversion. Actually, then, we train a soul winner before we get him converted. He sees how we work with him. Then, after he is converted, he remembers how we worked with him and he, in turn, can use the same method on another.

## **GIVE AN INVITATION IN EACH SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS AND HAVE A BAPTISMAL SERVICE AFTER SUNDAY SCHOOL**

There are many lost people in our Sunday schools who never attend the preaching services. Many of these are children who are old enough to be saved but are not allowed by their parents to stay for the preaching service. Many of these never get saved, and thousands of people who are saved and attend our Sunday schools never are present at a baptismal service. It is startling to me that we have our baptismal service at the poorest attended service of the day. During the Sunday school when the crowd is the biggest, we do not give the folks a chance to get saved. The morning service is a formal worship service (at least this is the case in many churches), and we delegate the evangelistic service to the Sunday night service when the people who need it most are not there. Periodically in the First Baptist Church we have an invitation given in each Sunday school class. It is amazing how many unsaved people we could find who are saved through this means.

The Sunday school could dismiss ten or fifteen minutes early some Sunday and come in the auditorium for a baptismal service. Those who are saved in the Sunday school hour and who will be baptized could be baptized then. This is simply another way to increase the number of converts baptized in our churches.

## **AN INSIDE CHURCH CENSUS**

When I was pastor of a little country church, we took a census of our neighborhood and only found seven prospects. Then we decided to take an inside church census and found about forty-five prospects. Many of these were won to Christ later. An inside church census simply is what its name implies. Take a census of the house in which each member of the church lives. Ask each member to take his own census bringing to you the name, age, spiritual condition and address of every person who lives in his house. It is shocking how many people live in the houses of our members and do not attend our churches. This is an especially good idea for churches in rural areas and small towns where prospects are not abundant.

## **INCLUDE THE SUBJECT OF BAPTISM IN A SERMON ALMOST EVERY SUNDAY**

Just one sentence could be said about baptism each Lord's day. In other words, the general atmosphere of the church should be that for a Christian not being baptized is a sin and that to be obedient a new convert must be baptized. The people should get the idea that baptism has nothing to do with salvation. However, they should be made to feel that it is a very important step, and that when they get saved, God wants them to be baptized. This certainly does not deviate from the scriptural practice and the example as set forth in the Book of Acts.

Now look at Matthew 28: 19 and 20. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am, with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Notice, if you would please, the imperatives in these verses: Go, teach, baptize and teach. You will notice the simple command of Christ is that we go and tell people how to be saved, baptize them after they are saved, and teach them to do what God commanded us to do. Since God's command to us was go and get people saved and get them baptized, then we are to teach others to go and get people saved and get them baptized. Notice the divine order: Go, teach all nations, baptize, and then train them to be soul winners. This is God's plan.

Let us carry out the Great Commission to its fullest, remembering that people are lost without Christ and need to be saved, and they too need to be baptized and trained to go back and bring others to the Saviour.

Let's increase our converts and our baptisms.